

U.S. Delegation Statement at ESCAP

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to congratulate your Excellency for your ascension to the chair.

As a Pacific nation, the United States remains deeply committed to the stability, prosperity, and development of the vast Asia-Pacific region. As a proud member of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the United States appreciates the work of this body to promote sustainable development and cooperation in the region. We congratulate Executive Secretary Akhtar on her new position and for managing a successful session and outcomes.

Throughout the year, we have met regularly with the ESCAP Secretariat and with other delegations to exchange views on addressing the region's challenges. The United States carefully reviewed the resolutions introduced this year and actively participated in discussions on them. We thank all Member States for their productive engagement and willingness to work together to forge consensus.

The United States fully supports this year's theme of "Regional connectivity for shared prosperity." We are firmly committed to the security and prosperity of Asia and believe connectivity, energy security, and open markets can help to realize that objective.

The United States remains focused on finding ways to enhance regional connectivity between different parts of the Asia-Pacific region. For several years now, we have pushed to enhance linkages between the energy rich countries of Central Asia and the expanding economies of South Asia. We have made efforts to support an Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor to help bridge South and Southeast Asia. Fostering these types of connections—physical infrastructure, regulatory trade architecture, and human and digital connectivity—will eventually create links all the way from Central Asia to Southeast Asia. In addition, five years ago we launched the Lower Mekong Initiative to strengthen cooperation and connectivity in mainland Southeast Asia. We have enhanced our partnership with ASEAN to help the organization expand connectivity within the ASEAN area, including through establishing the first non-ASEAN dedicated mission to the ASEAN Secretariat in 2010.

The United States is committed to working with Asia-Pacific economies to promote sustainable economic growth and prosperity. Sustained and inclusive economic growth is critical in laying the foundation for meaningful results, whether in alleviating poverty, providing job opportunities, tackling environmental challenges, or improving education. Pursuing inclusive growth for all populations is a key element of a 21st century economic agenda.

We envision a Post-2015 Agenda that articulates clear, ambitious, and measurable goals to advance four overarching priorities for development. First, a renewed effort to “finish the unfinished business” of the MDGs—that means attention to poverty eradication, improved health, education that focuses on learning outcomes as well as access, food security and nutrition, and water and sanitation among other issues. Second, an emphasis on high-impact drivers of development outcomes and prioritization of policies and investments that can have long-term transformative impact—including inclusive, sustained, and sustainable economic growth; gender equality and empowerment of women and girls; sustainable energy for all; peaceful and safe societies; and open and accountable institutions. Third, integration of key environmental sustainability priorities, with well-crafted targets in areas like environmentally sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, healthy oceans, conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems, and resilience to help protect

development gains from reversal. Finally, crafting a “new global partnership” that goes beyond traditional aid and is founded in a commitment by a diverse set of actors to mobilize a full spectrum of actions and investments from public, private, and domestic resources, and transparency to empower citizens.

The United States continues to deepen its historic ties in the region, build new partnerships, and engage with existing multilateral organizations to pursue shared interests. Last week, White House Counselor John Podesta led the U.S. delegation to attend the Pacific Islands Forum Post Forum Dialogue in Palau. This week, Secretary Kerry is visiting Myanmar to participate in the ASEAN Regional Forum. The United States fully recognizes the growing need for effective multilateralism to address common global challenges. We look forward to continued constructive engagement within ESCAP and other multilateral fora as we work to confront today’s greatest challenges together.